हैदराबाद के बारे में मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि जो काम हम दिल्ली में करते हैं, हैदराबाद का खास तौर से विशेष ध्यान रखते हैं और आगे भी रखेंगे।

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA : Sir, when we can get the free of cost these TVs and other plasma display panels, I can't understand why the Minister has replied that, through tender system, TVs and other things are being made available at major airports. If we can get it at one airport, I am sure, we can get it at every airport. So can I get an assurance from the hon. Minister that all over the country, we will have plenty of these TVs and other plasma display panels for the convenience of passengers, but without any cost ?

श्री सैयद शाहनवाज हुसैन : सभापति जी, जहां-कहीं पर अगर कोई स्पॉन्सर बिना पैसे के इस तरह का प्लाज्म टी.वी. देने को तैयार होगा, वहाँ हम लेंगे और जहां इस पर इस तरह से किसी के जरिए नहीं मिलेगा वहां हम खुद प्लाज्म टी.वी. हर एयरपोर्ट पर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर लगाएंगे।

Drying up of rivers due to inter-linking

*549 : SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the apprehension express by the Director-General World Wide Fund (WWF) as reported in the media to the effect that the proposed inter-linking of the country's rivers is likely to result in drying up of the rivers and turning into beds of sand; and

(b) if so, what precautions are being taken to prevent such environmental catastrophe and whether the Task Force constituted to study the proposed inter-linking of rivers has due representation of such international environmental organisations as WWF?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The feasibility studies being carried out by NWDA cover studies pertaining to environmental & ecological surveys. In these studies, a minimum lean season flow of 10% of the total flows at diversion structure after meeting downstream requirement is being provided to maintain the environmental and ecological needs of the river regime and the downstream areas. Shri R. K. Pachauri, Director General, Tata Energy Research Institute, New Delhi, an Expert on environmental aspects has been inducted as Member of the Task Force on Inter-linking of Rivers.

श्री कलराज मिश्र : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि एक वर्ल्ड वाइल्ड फंड नामक संस्था है, जिसने नदियों को जोड़ने के परिणामस्वरूप होने वाले दुष्परिणामों से संबंधित कोई रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत की थी, उसे क्या आपने देखा है ? अगर उसको देखा है तो समाधानकारक उसके मूल बिन्दु क्या हैं ?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Sir, as I have stated earlier in my main reply, every aspect of this mega project is being studied by the Task Force. Shri R. K. Pachauri also, who is one of the experts in environmental field, is there in the tasks force to study it. Moreover, as far as the reports that has been published and whether I have seen it or not yes, I have seen it, and certainly, we are going into the details of this report.

श्री कलराज मिश्र : मान्यवर, मैंने उसके मूल बिंदु के बारे में जानना चाहा था, लेकिन मंत्री जी ने उसको बताया नहीं और बताया कि उस संबंध में कुछ निर्णय उन्होंने लिए हैं।

दूसरे प्रश्न के रूप में मैं यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि इसके पहले डा० के० एल० राव की अध्यक्षता में प्रमुख नदियों को जोड़ने से संबंधित कार्य-योजना पर विचार करने के लिए एक कमेटी बनाई गई थी और उसके आधार पर विभिन्न विश्वविद्यालयों और संस्थाओं के द्वारा उसका अध्ययन किया गया था और अध्ययन करने के पश्चात जो उसके निष्कर्ष आए थे, उनमें यह था कि जो वाइल्ड लाइफ है और सी ऐनिमल्स हैं, उन पर उसका बड़ा दुष्प्रभाव पड़ेगा। तो मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि इन अध्ययन समितियों के जो निष्कर्ष हैं उनको देखकर, उनके अनुरूप क्या कार्य-योजना बनाई गई है ताकि उन पर उस तरह का दुष्प्रभाव न पड़ने पाए ?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Sir, I have stated that the Task Force, which has been going into the details of all these aspects -- and many experts are there -- will, certainly, go into all the aspects of this problem. And, the Report will come up before the Government. After that, if possible, we can have a discussion here also.

श्री संजय निरुपम : सर, आज सुबह से नदियों को जोड़ने के बारे में चर्चा हो रही है। एक चर्चा जो महाराष्ट्र में बड़ी गंभीरतापूर्वक आकार ले रही है, वह है कि महाराष्ट्र की गोदावरी नदी का पानी गुजरात में भेजे जाने की शायद तैयारी चल रही है, केन्द्र सरकार के पास इस तरह का प्रस्ताव है और इस प्रस्ताव के विरोध में महाराष्ट्र गवर्नमेंट ने शायद अपना कुछ स्टेंड लिया है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या महाराष्ट्र गवर्नमेंट की तरफ से विरोध प्रदर्शित करते हुए कोई पत्र आया है ? महाराष्ट्र गवर्नमेंट की क्या भूमिका है ?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Sir, I have no information regarding this aspect.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ : Sir, vast resources are needed for this laudable project. In fact, the hon. Minister, last time, was not even sure of the figures. But finally, he corrected himself and said that Rs. 1,56,000 crores would be needed...

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : No it is Rs. 5,60,000 crores.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ : All right, it is a fact that more resources are needed and, may be, this country finds the resources. But it is not only world wide fund but many environmentalists also do not feel sure that this is going to yield advantages to this country. Through you, Sir, I want to ask the hon. Minister whether he will consider to organise a national debate—that must be a real national debate—not only in the two Houses of Parliament but also throughout the nation. Would the hon. Minister give an assurance that only after a vigorous national debate that such a project would be taken up for implementation?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : It is a suggestion for consideration.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN : Sir, this very ambitious project of inter-linking rivers is occupying the best of the brains in the country. Sir, there are some rivers which are international in nature. They are flowing from China, Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan. Has the Government taken any initiative to start dialogues with the neighbouring countries through which these international rivers flow and to ascertain their views on this project?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Sir, so far as interlinking of rivers, namely, Brahmaputra and Ganga is concerned, certainly, we will take into confidence the Governments of Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. But, before having discussions with these neighbouring countries, we are going into the details of the project. Moreover, we are trying to convince amongst ourselves, inside the country, whether it is feasible and whether people want it. And, if there is a consensus, international ramifications of the project will be considered and we will, certainly, have consultations with these countries.

SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU : Sir, environment being one of the important aspects, I would like to know whether the Ministry of Environment and Forests has given a list of prerecuisites before implementing the views of the task Force on inter-linking of rivers. In fact I would like to know whether the Ministry of Environment and Forests has given a list of prerequisites.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Sir, the Ministry of Environment and Forests are very much a part of this Task Force. They are being consulted and certainly, whatever suggestions come from them.

SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU : Have they submitted any prerequisites?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : We are having consultations with different Ministry .....

SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU : Sir, it has been published in yesterday's Hindu that certain prerequisites have been submitted by the Environment and Forest Ministry. This may, kindly, be taken note of.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI : Yes, I will.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Studies on linking of rivers

*550. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleaded to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a former Water Resources Minister, Shri K. L. Rao had got the proposal of linking of Ganga River with Southern rivers examined;

(b) if so, the details and conclusions of study undertaken at that time; and

(c) the reasons for abandoning that scheme at that time?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI) : (a) The then Central Water and Power Commission prepared a note on the National Water Grid in 1972 and suggested three possible alignments for the Ganga-Cauvery links. Dr. K. L. Rao further studied the note of the Central Water and Power Commission and advocated one of the alignments for the Ganga-Cauvery link along with a few other links including the Ganga-Brahmaputra link.

(b) The Ganga-Cauvery link essentially envisaged withdrawal of 1680 cumec of the flood flows of the Ganga near Patna for about 150 days in a year and pumping about 1400 cumec of this water over a head of 549 metres for transfer to the Peninsular region and utilising the remaining 280 cumec in Ganga basin itself. The proposal envisaged utilisation of 2.59 Million hectare metre of Ganga water to bring under irrigation an additional area of 4 Million hectare.

(c) The Ganga-Cauvery link as proposed by Dr. K. L. Rao was examined by Central Water Commission and found to be grossly under estimated. Besides